

**Západočeská univerzita v Plzni**

**Fakulta pedagogická**

**Katedra anglického jazyka**

**Diplomová práce**

**ROLE MATEŘSKÉHO JAZYKA VE VÝUCE CIZÍCH  
JAZYKŮ**

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**Plzeň 2021**

**University of West Bohemia**

**Faculty of Education**

**Department of English**

**Graduate Thesis**

**ROLE OF L1 IN LANGUAGE LEARNING**

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**Plzeň 2021**

Prohlašuji, že jsem práci vypracovala samostatně s použitím uvedené literatury a zdrojů informací.

*V Plzni, 30. června 2021*

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Jméno Příjmení

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor Mgr. Barbora Reynaert, Ph.D. for her advice and precious time. Secondly, I would like to show gratitude to both teachers who agreed to be a part of my research, even during this uneasy time. Lastly, my thank you goes to my family and friends for their support during my studies.

## ABSTRACT

Pomahačová, Julie. University of West Bohemia. June, 2021. Role of L1 in language learning. Supervisor: Mgr. Barbora Reynaert, Ph.D.

This graduate thesis is focused on the role of L1 in language learning. Students are naturally influenced by the teacher's use of language in the classroom; thus, the teachers and their use of L1 were the main focus of the thesis. Though it is not necessary to exclude L1 from language classroom, the teachers should be aware of their use of L1 in order to ensure the highest exposure of L2 and hence, support the second language acquisition. The thesis starts with the theoretical background focused on the role of L1 in the ELT classroom and the attitudes towards L1 use. In addition, practical implications from literature are discussed. The second part of the thesis introduces the research focused on specific purposes of the use of Czech language in the lessons which were observed in two chosen schools. The subjects of this research are two English language teachers. The practical part contains observations, interviews and finally, the conclusions of the research questions. Since the research is focused on two teachers, conclusions for each of them were made. It was found out that both teachers' main purpose of the L1 use is giving instructions. L1 is also often used when encouraging students to speak. Another aim was to determine whether the level of the students influences the L1 use in the lessons and the conclusion was drawn upon the observations of the two teachers; the level of the students does not influence the L1 use in the lessons.

Keywords: L1, mother tongue, L2, own-language use, code-switching, second language acquisition, language learning, teachers of English

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*Graph 2:* Occurrence of criteria in the lessons of TB

## I. INTRODUCTION

This thesis is concerned with the role of L1 in second language learning. Though the second language should have the primary role in the ELT classroom, it is no doubt that many language teachers include both languages in their lessons. The stances towards L1 use have changed profoundly through time and this thesis's aim is to describe particularly the current approaches to L1 use in the ELT classroom.

My choice of the topic was mainly based on my experience during my teaching practice; my feeling was that I use L1 more than it is necessary. Also, during my studies I have encountered various approaches to L1 in teaching; some teachers use L1 frequently, some try to avoid it, and some have rather strict rules about the L1 use, thus it came to my interest to know more about the L1 use in the language classroom. During my practice it seemed that the students welcome the L1 use during their lessons since sometimes during instructions or explanations it may come to misunderstanding, however, I was sure I am using English more often than really needed. During researching and learning more about the topic, I have found out that L1 brings many advantages in the classroom but must be used consciously with the right aim in mind. I catch myself sometimes using L1 even though the meaning could be made clear in English; surely, many other teachers have similar feelings as well. In order to examine this problem closely, the topic of the role of the mother tongue in language learning was chosen.

The chapter *Theoretical Background* is dedicated to the topic of L1; first, the stances towards L1 through time are briefly described. Secondly, the thesis deals with functions of L1 in the classroom, the use of mother tongue and the debates which still surround this topic. The next part of the theory is concerned with attitudes of the teachers and students; the last two parts of the theory are practical implications for L1 use from the chosen literature.

The third chapter *Methods* is concerned with methodology of the research, and it is a beginning of the practical part of the thesis. The methods and procedure, as well as subjects of the research are introduced. The aim of the research is to examine a particular teacher's use of L1, more concretely, the purposes of mother tongue use within the classroom (and to establish what is the most common purpose); whether the level of the students influences the L1 use is another question to be determined in the research. The research contains lesson observations and interviews with the teachers.

Next chapter provides implications for teaching and connects the theory with the practical part of the thesis. The chapter also contains a brief explanation of the limitations of

the research and outlines other possibilities of the research within this field. The final, sixth chapter, concludes on the whole thesis and is a summary of the information and findings made.

## II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### **Attitudes towards use of L1 in L2 acquisition in time**

The role of first language in second language acquisition has been discussed to great extent over many years. The usage of first language has been avoided by many educators and researchers, possibly due to successful immersion programs or decreased exposure which using L1 (first language) in the classroom brings. Also, using only the target language is believed to increase the students' motivation; the students have the immediate need to understand the target language, hence learn faster (Turnbull & Dailey-O'Cain, 2009).

The first traces of second language acquisition studies go back to the behaviorist theory. According to the theory, L2 (second language) learning is the same as all different kinds of learning which also includes L1 acquisition, therefore L2 should be taught separately. It was Chomsky who questioned this theory. He suggested that language learning (L1 included) is more of a mental process than a behaviorist one. These stances resulted in two theories about language acquisition; behaviorists saw L1 as an obstacle which complicates acquiring L2 and results in errors. The mentalist theory, based on Chomsky's findings, claimed that learners of L2 use their inherent capacity to create a different system, later called the 'interlanguage' (Ellis & Shintani, 2014).

Intensively studied were also the cases of 'naturalistic learners' which includes those learners who learned through exposure to L2. The fact that the learners were able to learn grammar rules regardless of different system in their L1 indicates an innate linguistic system. Interestingly, the study of naturalistic learners presents stages of second language acquisition (SLA). It suggests that many learners experience different stages in their language learning; the 1<sup>st</sup> stage may also be called a 'silent period'. In this stage learners build a resource for their future language use through listening to others. Next, they construct their speech based on chunks (mainly routines in the language). SLA continues as the learners are capable of breaking these chunks into single words and grammatical phenomena. (Ellis & Shintani, 2014)

Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century the mother tongue was banned in the English classes. The theory was that learners should acquire the language without interference from their own language (Hall & Cook, 2013). Research such as L1=L2 (Ellis, 1986; Krashen, 1981) where the main argument for L1 exclusion is that when acquiring the first language, we are

only exposed to the given language and not any other, only supported the arguments for L1 exclusion (as cited in Elis & Shintani, 2014).

Even some current approaches in the classroom require strict L2 only usage such as task-based teaching or learning. On the other hand, in some classes these approaches may be necessary e.g., mixed language classes, English native speaker in a different country etc. (Hall & Cook, 2012)

However, recent studies talk differently about the use of L1 in ELT classroom. New findings imply that L1 assists the learners to acquire the target language. Some theorists such as Macaro (2000) suggest that the endeavour of the teachers to use the target language frequently may lead to teacher-centred lessons very easily. He further suggests that through L1 it is possible to accomplish not only new language knowledge, but also pedagogical functions in a short period of time (as cited in Hall & Cook, 2013).

### **Using L1 in ELT classrooms**

When learning second language, we are naturally influenced by our mother tongue, in fact, the more similarities the languages share, the easier the learning process is (Ringbom, 1987). As stated in the previous section, using L1 in ELT classrooms may be beneficial for a variety of reasons. Permitting the L1 use, however, may involve an alternation of the teaching process since we will be viewing learners as probably future bilinguals. This means that the process of alternating the languages must be taken into account (Turnbull & Dailey-O'Cain, 2009).

The process of changing two languages in one speech is also called code-switching and according to Turnbull and Dailey-O'Cain (2009) is defined as the following definition states: "the systematic, alternating use of two languages or language varieties within a single conversation or utterance" (p. 131). If we are inclined to applying the communicative approach in the classroom, students as well as the teacher should acknowledge that using two languages is a natural part of language behaviour and language learning (Turnbull & Dailey-O'Cain, 2009)

The usage of L1 in the classroom is supported by arguments such as: it is easier for the teacher to explain the grammar, to introduce the new vocabulary, to maintain the discipline in the classroom or to deal with the organization matters. Further, L1 also helps to create better relationships between students and the teacher (Hall & Cook, 2013). Kim and

Elder (2008) state that using the L1 leads to fulfilling the social goals through manifesting personal interest. Some researchers even claim that L1 usage is the moral obligation of the teacher in order to establish a positive learning environment (Hall & Cook, 2013).

When the teacher naturally uses code-switching in the ELT classrooms, an important question arises: What is the optimal time of using L1/L2 during the lesson? According to Macaro (as cited in Turnbull & Dailey-O'Cain, 2009), the optimal use is “where codeswitching in broadly communicative classrooms can enhance second language acquisition and/or proficiency better than second language exclusivity” (p.38). Nonetheless, it has yet not been proven whether the exclusivity of L2 leads to worse or better results. On top of that, the optimal use is different according to what the goal of the classroom is; if a goal is translation from one language to another, there will be a difference in the optimal use of switching. It is difficult to draw conclusions from statements such as: I use L1 when explaining grammar since we do not know the context of the whole lesson (Macaro, as cited in Turnbull & Dailey-O'Cain, 2009).

Own-language use may bring benefits, but it should not be forgotten that the learners still need to be exposed to the L2 as much as possible in order to practice the target language and to receive language input. The use of L2 is a motivation for the students since they are able to experience success as well as gain motivation for future learning. Some theorists are thus concerned that without well-formulated and straightforward research results teachers may be evolving their own rules about L1 use in the classroom (Hall & Cook, 2013).

To summarize this section: code-switching techniques may help the learners in certain parts of acquiring the language, but it can be difficult to determine the degree of the optimal language use for the teachers. Not much research was made which would prove whether exclusive L2 use, or code-switching is better than the other. Regardless, the use of L1 may assist by establishing better relationships in a classroom or by maintaining a class discipline and help in explaining new language features (Macaro, as cited in Turnbull & Dailey- O'Cain, 2009).

### **Debate surrounding L1 use in ELT classrooms**

The stance on L1 use in ELT classroom has naturally shifted to a more positive direction, yet some studies still discuss the counter arguments surrounding L1 use. Rarely there can be found arguments against L1 use and if so, a study written by Maximilian Berlitz

*Method of teaching foreign languages* from 1916 is the source for them (Kerr, 2019). In this section, the main arguments against the use of L1 are discussed.

It is commonly believed that learners should be able to think in L2 as though the languages are separated in their heads; however, it is proven that languages are processed (to some extent) parallelly. On top of that all, it is highly unlikely that the learner will process information in L2, not unless he/she reaches the advanced level of proficiency, C1. What the goal should be is processing the information and talking without translating it in the students' heads, for which we do not need to exclude L1 from the ELT lessons (Kerr, 2019).

When it comes to L1 use in the classroom, highly debated is also a language transfer, the negative one in specific. Negative transfer according to Ellis and Shintani (2014) is described as a “transfer of mother tongue patterns into the learners' L2” (p. 302). This means that L1 is usually seen as a source for errors and interferences in the target language (Ellis & Shintani, 2014). But the language transfer can be also positive. Positive transfer means that the mother tongue and the target language share similar patterns or words which makes the learning easier and more approachable since learners look rather for similarities than differences (Ringbom, 2007). Language transfer happens naturally in various learning situations and the L1 should not be therefore seen as a disruptive element.

Lastly, L1 is perceived as a tool for translation and since grammar translation methods were dismissed many years ago, L1 use in the classroom seems to be outdated (Hall & Cook, 2013). According to Kerr (2019), translation when acquiring the language should not be seen in such an old-fashioned way. Translation should be rather considered a mediator, since with its help it is easier to approach the second language. As anyone who has ever learned L2 knows, translation is a natural part of language usage, thus should be viewed in a broader sense and is also not to be dismissed (Kerr, 2019).

This brief section dealt with counterarguments to L1 use in the classroom. As each paragraph explained, those arguments were refuted since as more recent studies believe, L1 does have its place in ELT classrooms. It is eligible to look at the L1 use from a different perspective which indicates that L1 use is not a disruption when acquiring the second language.

### **The functions of L1 use**

Though the time and use of L1 in the classroom differs from teacher to teacher, the functions of the own language use stay relatively the same (Hall & Cook, 2013). Many

teachers in Duff & Polio's study (1990) stated that they incline to L1 use especially when the target item is especially different from their L1. Their study was later extended and dedicated to details about functions of L1. The study states that teachers use L1 usually for grammar or vocabulary explanations, management, and administration. The L1 use also functions as a tool of mediation between students and the teacher; with own language use the teacher shows empathy and understanding for the students (Hall & Cook, 2013).

The functions of L1 use were distinguished and categorized in two groups: core functions and social functions. Core functions include use connected to learning the language e.g., explaining grammar or checking the understanding. Social functions of the L1 are concerned with administration, rapport with the students or instructions (Kerr, 2019). These conclusions can be found in many other publications such as Littlewood & Yu (2011) (as cited in Hall & Cook, 2013).

Many authors similarly agree on the important fact that the L1 is a sort of reassurance for the learners. According to Allwright & Bailey (1991) can the L2 only approach deprive the learners from their normal means of communication (L1) and can cause that the learners do not behave as they normally do (as cited in Hall & Cook, 2013). Even the adult learners have the feeling of disadvantage in the classroom where only target language is prioritized. From the more political stance of view, some authors such as Auerbach claim that target language negatively fortifies authority and power of the teacher (as cited in Hall & Cook, 2013).

Various authors also came to an agreement that own language use, and especially with beginners, helps to establish a better learning atmosphere. Therefore, own language leads in the ELT classroom to less anxiety and creates safer space if used appropriately (Hall & Cook, 2013). According to Edstrom (2006) using L1 is a better tool to connect with the learners and also helps with more difficult themes which are discussed in ELT lessons such as culture and stereotypes. On top of that all, own language strengthens motivation and attitudes of the learners (Schweers, as cited in Hall & Cook, 2013).

According to previous paragraphs, own language use can be greatly beneficial, some authors such as Johnston (2003) or Edstrom (2006) even concluded that in order to create better relationships and greater respect in the classroom, the advantages of L1 use can outweigh the target language use. This can have as an effect a shorter period of time dedicated to L2 (as cited in Hall & Cook, 2013). Edstrom (2006) however claims that using mother tongue because it is easier should never be the solution.



In conclusion, the functions of L1 use in the ELT classroom indicate that own language use has an important role in the language learning; it facilitates the understanding and reassures the students. Goal of L1 use is mainly to establish a better atmosphere in the classroom and helps as a mediator between students and the teacher. It can serve to explain difficult topics and unfamiliar language items. The social advantages of mother tongue were also discussed in this section. However, it should not be forgotten that the target language (and its exposure) has its unshakable place in ELT classroom, and it is not recommended to incline to L1 use just because it can sometimes be easier.

### **Teacher's attitudes towards L1 in the ELT classroom and its use**

The attitude of the teacher towards the use of L1 in ELT classrooms naturally shapes the course and the content of the lessons. Their attitudes are formed by many different elements such as their own experience in the role of the teacher or even in the role of the student; this means that there is a large variety of attitudes (Kerr, 2019).

Many teachers also view the L1 use or code-switching in the classroom as unfortunate despite it being helpful for classroom management, relationships between students and the teacher or for explaining new grammatical phenomena (Hall & Cook, 2013). Even though many teachers believe L2 should be the main language of the lesson, not many of them would be pro excluding the L1 completely (Macaro, 2005).

According to research conducted by Hall and Cook (2013) the majority of teachers use L1 sometimes or often when making uncertainties clear, 16,2 % even always. The percentage is high also when introducing new vocabulary, almost 61,5 % uses L1 sometimes, often or always. According to this research, and as mentioned above, L1 is used for creating a better climate in the classroom (53,2 %) (Hall & Cook, 2013). Teachers refuge to L1 especially when they try to accelerate the pace of the lesson (Kerr, 2019).

The general attitude of the teachers was also described; over half of the teachers tries to reduce the L1 use in the classroom, limiting it only for certain parts of the lesson. This result is in contradiction to the claims in the preceding paragraph where it is stated that more than half of them uses L1 in many different moments during their lessons (Hall & Cook, 2013). Copland and Neokleus (2011) had a similar finding; even though the teachers in a questionnaire claimed that they avoid L1, it was found out that during lessons observations L2 is used very frequently. The questions about disadvantages of L1 use were mostly disclaimed. Furthermore, many teachers also believe that more of L1 use is suitable for

certain groups of learners depending on the age, level of the learners or the size of the classroom (Hall & Cook, 2013).

However, the differences between individual teachers are also vast. According to research conducted by Copland and Neokleous (2011) with Greek teachers of English, some teachers turn to L1 very frequently, others almost do not. More concretely, four teachers who were a part of the research had 1191 Greek utterances altogether, but almost half of them were made by a single teacher; even though none of the teachers were completely against L1 use; only of the teacher had a stronger L2 mainly policy, but still her students were allowed to use L1 when necessary.

The L1 use is not neglected by most of the teachers, still, its use leads by many teachers to feeling of guilt. This emotion is an extremely specific issue with English teachers and it was previously explained by Carless (as cited in Copland & Neokleous, 2011):” [if] the teacher’s mandate is to improve students’ English language ... how does this occur if students are conversing in the Mother Tongue?” (p.277). Teachers are very critical of their L1 use and they rarely can give reasons why do they use it in the first place. The most obvious explanation is that when a teacher shares a mother tongue with their students, L1 use is seen as the simplest solution; what is not seen and accepted by many teachers is that own-language use can have its benefits. To summarize the paragraph, even though the teachers use L1 (and in some cases very frequently), they still see the mother tongue use as problematic and as an obstacle to learning, the L1 use in ELT classroom is then accompanied by a feeling of guilt (Copland & Neokleous, 2011).

It should also be noted that not only the students and teachers influence the use of L1 in the classroom. The research also shows that parents have their say in what is expected in the ELT classroom; they expect exclusive target language use in the education of their children. On the other hand, and perhaps surprisingly, the education ministries do not show their interest in L2 exclusive use and thus, do not influence the view of the teachers (Hall & Cook, 2013).

There were quite a few and recent studies made about the teachers’ L1 use in the classroom and even though the findings mostly state that L1 can be beneficial for the target language learning the stance towards L1 use is still mostly negative. But there is still much research to be made in the future, to confirm or deny what is the optimal use of L1/L2 in the ELT classroom (Copland & Neokleous, 2011).

In summary, teachers use their mother tongue during their lessons. The L1 use ensures a better pace of the lesson, since explaining and understanding is then faster, it helps

to create a better atmosphere or to convey meaning better. L1 is also seen as a more appropriate tool for some types of learners (e.g., learners with lower level or young learners). Though the phenomena named above could be seen as beneficial, many teachers still see using L1 as disruptive and unsuitable. Still, they use own language despite these beliefs which are shared among many teachers. What should also be noted are the differences in the stances of the teachers and their actual use in the ELT classrooms; according to most of the answers in multiple researches, teachers do not want to use L1 and try to avoid it; researches have shown that they do the opposite. Own-language use also brings a feeling of guilt to many teachers as they believe the students should be exposed to a maximum amount of L2. In conclusion, the teachers' L1 use is affected by various factors and there is still research to be made in this field.

### **Learner and L1 in ELT classroom**

Unlike the teachers' attitudes towards L1, the learners' stance and use of L1 in ELT classroom was substantially less studied. It is a fact that students definitely use L1, especially in situations where they are not supposed to do so such as small talks about unrelated topics. The need to use L1 and to "misbehave" is growing stronger as the students reach a higher level of their education, particularly at the end of the primary level. In this age the learners have the strong need to express their opinions, but they may be avoiding the target language for various reasons, some of them being fearful of negative feedback from their peers or feeling embarrassed when using the target language. The students' L1 use, most often in conversation student-student, is inevitable and the teacher should be careful with strict policies about it (Kerr, 2019). Even in immersion programs, according to a research paper from Tarone and Swain (1995), it is impossible to prevent L1 use in students' interactions. Dealing too strictly with students' L1 use in the classroom may bring even bigger unwillingness to use the target language (Kerr, 2019).

The attitudes of students about the L1 use from the teacher are mostly positive. According to Rolin-Ianziti and Varshney (2008) research with French learners, the learners themselves even preferred L1 use for reaching specific goals e.g., acquiring vocabulary or grammar which is only supported by the claim from Schmitt and McCarthy (1997): "a learner's L1 is one of the most important factors in learning L2 vocabulary" (p.2). Yet another research conducted, with German learners, has shown that the students favour to use L1 in communication with the teacher. On top of that, some researchers claim that students

prefer explanations of grammar in L1 since the given topic becomes more intelligible for them (Lee, 2012).

The mother tongue has a significant impact on learners' L2. According to study by Lee (2012), the more proficient the learner is in his/her own language, the better results can he/she achieve. The study further suggests that the use of L1 (when it is convenient and helpful) is more favourable for young learners. The author also states that in order to make the language more comprehensible for the learners, it is appropriate to implement code-switching. Moreover, the current status of English should be also taken into consideration; English nowadays is understood as an international language and therefore L2 only approach (and being exposed to only one English variety) is no more favourable by the learners (Lee, 2012).

In some aspects of their learning, students themselves expect more L1 e.g., explaining cultural topics or introducing new grammar and vocabulary. Students, as well as the teachers themselves confirmed, expect clarification of instructions in L1 (Yao, 2013). In a questionnaire conducted by Yao (2013), teachers believe that code-switching can ensure a better discipline in the classroom and on the contrary, most of the students in the study disagreed with this statement. The study concludes by saying that students have a mostly positive attitude about code-switching in the classroom (Yao, 2013).

To summarize; students themselves do not use L1 that often in the classroom; mostly in communication with the teacher or during “unwanted” conversation, outside the topic of the lesson, peer to peer. L1 from the teacher is on the other hand sometimes expected and favoured, especially during grammar explanations or vocabulary introductions. L1 has its place in the students' learning; not only it helps them to acquire the language and understand instructions, the proficiency in L1 directly affects the proficiency in L2.

### **Teaching techniques**

In order to implement the L1 in the ELT lessons properly, and for the learning to be effective, it is necessary to be familiar with various bilingual techniques and methods. It should not be forgotten that L2 should play the major role in SLA, still L1 can be a useful tool for acquiring the language (Butzkamm & Caldwell, 2009). However, if the teacher relies on L1 too much, he/she should not be surprised if the students adopt the same pattern. Naturally, sometimes the teacher tends to incline for L1 use, especially during explanations

or instructions, but the optimal use should be always kept in mind. But as discussed in previous sections, and stated simply, if the learner does not understand the instructions in a foreign language or if the language task is too difficult to manage, there is no use of insisting on L2 (Kerr, 2019).

There is a limited number of techniques, where the teacher uses L1 to some extent and L2 at the same time, which can help with the management of L1 use and of the classroom. These techniques ensure more chances to use L2, in speaking as well as in listening and they offer helpful opportunities for learning the L2. Finally, they should function as a reassurance for the students and should not make them feel uncomfortable during their language acquisition (Kerr, 2019). Below the main teaching techniques which include code-switching are discussed.

### **Sandwiching**

Though it is recommended to instruct the learners through showing pictures, gesturing, or demonstrating and using the L2, a tactful use of L1 may facilitate the second language acquisition, and even help to create foreign language atmosphere (Butzkamm & Caldwell, 2009). Some words or instructions may be problematic for the learners, especially when hearing them for the first time e.g., ‘match’, therefore target language only instructions may not be clear enough. A technique called *sandwiching* can help the teacher to solve this problem (Kerr, 2019).

The sequence of the technique goes: the teacher says an instruction in English, then in L1 and then again in English, example from Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009): “You’ve skipped a line. Du hast eine Zeile übersprungen. You’ve skipped a line.” (p. 33). Sandwiching should be considered a key method in foreign language classroom and should be executed in a quiet tone, as if the teacher only says something aside. This technique is also regarded as the method which enables the quickest communication in foreign language classroom (Butzkamm & Caldwell, 2009).

It is not anything new that the students should have the highest input of L2 possible. But the teachers should not forget that the input always has to be intelligible. If the instructions or new language input are not clear, the effort of the teacher is then useless, no matter how much he/she demonstrates or gesticulates and that is one of the reasons for L1 use in the classroom, sometimes there is not much a teacher can do without a bit of translation (Cormon, as cited in Butzkamm & Caldwell, 2009).

This technique should not be mistaken with translating everything you can. Only the newly introduced language items or unknown, and not yet memorized words or phrases, should be translated. The priority should always be to make yourself clear in the foreign language and to say the instructions in that manner which is the most comprehensible for the students. If the teacher translates everything, even with a help of the sandwiching technique, word for word, students tend to not concentrate on instructions in the foreign language and rather wait for instructions in L1 (Butzkamm & Caldwell, 2009).

### **Own language moments**

During learning (or teaching) the target language, all participants should be highly concentrated and motivated as learning the language requires deep focus. This high level of concentration is sadly not possible to hold for a longer period of time. It has not yet been proven how long the learner can focus on the target language and the tasks surrounding the learning; however, the span of concentration tends to be most likely shorter than would be expected. The time of the concentration depends on various factors such as the time of the day or mood of the student. Moreover, students with lower levels of the target language lose their focus quickly and the younger the learner is, the shorter the focus is as well. Even adult learners have difficulties holding attention longer than twenty minutes. And since young learners usually have lower levels of L2, it is clear that the longer utterances or activities may be problematic for them (Kerr, 2019).

Therefore, it should be taken into account that moments when the learners lose their attention will arise, as the lessons are usually a bit longer than the concentration of the students; and teachers should be aware of this fact. However, it is possible for the teacher to have these types of situations in control. They may allow the students to use their own language; to have their 'own language moments'. These moments may take place in order to relax from the L2 use, but they can be used in different parts and moments of the lesson. Example being allowing the L1 use before speaking activity; they can use own language and prepare their speech or arguments in L1. Not only will it make them more creative (since they are not limited by the language), but it can also prolong the speaking time afterwards. The L1 use could be allowed also in the middle of the speaking activity, particularly when the students are not talking enough. They may switch to different partner and use L1 to brainstorm new ideas which may again bring a longer L2 use afterwards. Where own language moments may be especially beneficial is during students' reflections on their own

language learning. Speaking about their own experiences from the learning leads to metacognition which facilitates the learning itself and may lead to higher level of motivation and self-confidence. These moments do not have to take a long time in order to be useful and they should be performed in L1 up to the B1 level (Kerr, 2019).

Lastly, it should be noted that students should be aware of the rules when using L1; there are various ways of signaling the switch, e.g., two flags and the teacher points to the country which language would be used. It takes a certain amount of time for students to get used to this specific usage and the rules surrounding, but once the students become responsible in their language use, it is also possible to allow them to state where they want their L1 to be used (Kerr, 2019)

### **Bilingual instructions**

This technique is related to sandwiching. If the teacher introduces a new vocabulary item during instructions (e.g., “translate the text”), this new item should be kept in a record of the students’ vocabulary. A good way of keeping a record is to have these instructions written side by side (in their notebooks, on some posters, etc.), one phrase in L1, the second in L2. It is recommended to have these on small pieces of paper. If one phrase is often used and the students remember it, it can be removed and replaced with a new language item. If the students are not sure about the instructions, they may look it up and there is no need for the teacher to use L1. Bilingual instructions can be also realized with the help of the students; the teacher gives the instructions using L2 and lets one student to retell the instructions in their own language (Kerr, 2019).

This section was dedicated to various techniques which include L1 usage. If these techniques are implemented correctly, they do not threaten the time span of the L2 use. They can provide a longer use of L2, make students feel safer and more prepared for the activities and may lead to better self-reflection. The rules should be set clear though it may take some time for students to get used to them. All the techniques named above are usually used in ELT lessons, however, not every teacher is familiar with them, and it is possible they are not used properly. The time of the usage should be also kept in mind; the desire is to still have the highest L2 exposure and use possible.

## **Practical implications**

As already stated above, more focus when it comes to L1 in the classroom is put on the teacher and not on the students. However, the goal of ELT lessons is to teach the students how to become autonomous in their learning process which L1 based tools and activities can facilitate (Kerr, 2019). The purpose of this section is to give an overview of the tools and activities which could be used in ELT classroom, and which include both languages of the learners and could be helpful for learners and their independence in then learning process.

### **Tools**

Using tools is an easy way to access language, especially now, working with available tools has become crucial for the learning process. During ELT lessons, the learners should not only learn the necessary language skills, but also where to obtain information (Kerr, 2019).

The most known tools are probably online translators; the most popular being Google Translate. Others quite well known are for example Translate Facebook app or Microsoft Translator. Using online translators should be promoted in ELT classrooms, since it makes some parts of the learner's journey easier. On top of that, the precision of online translators has improved drastically during the recent years; the improvement being so notable, it made some people question the necessity of language learning. However, the accuracy largely depends on the languages and the similarity between them, as well as on the type of the texts. Students should not be encouraged to rely on translators much, they still need to know the basic patterns of the language, since the irregularities often appear in word order, pronouns, style or phrasal words and idioms. It can also be useful to teach the students how to work with these inaccuracies; they may work with the translator and identify the mistakes which can lead to educated use in the future (Kerr, 2019).

Another very useful tool to use in ELT lessons with regard to L1 are dictionaries. The translation of individual words should be conducted with their help as online translators may not offer the most appropriate words. Especially when writing specific texts, students will not probably know which words are considered formal and informal, for this the dictionaries should be provided. Dictionaries can be used as a part of various activities which can then facilitate the students' understanding of single words (Kerr, 2019).



One of the most important challenges of language learning is acquiring vocabulary. If the students are able to deliberately learn the vocabulary on their own, it can play a crucial role in their learning process. Flashcards, or digital flashcards, can help them during their learning. This could work in the classroom, as well as a part of their independent learning. Quizlet or Memrise are useful on-line tools for vocabulary practice which the students can train individually at home. It is also recommended to use translation for younger learners and definitions for learners with a higher level of their language proficiency. Some websites also offer games which can increase the motivation to know the vocabulary. This tool may not be suitable for every learner but may offer a very suitable possibility for others. If the teachers want their students to be familiar with these tools, and for these tools to be effective, some parts of the lessons should be dedicated to their use (Kerr, 2019).

All of the tools named above are only a few suitable variants for ELT classroom. Especially when it comes to English as a foreign language, the learners have many other options which can help them in their learning process. As mentioned in the paragraph above, it is useful to spend some time in a lesson introducing these materials or let the learners themselves introduce what they already know. Some other examples of helpful tools can be explanatory videos, movies with subtitles or translated lyrics (Kerr, 2019).

## **Activities**

According to Luke Prodomou (as cited in Deller & Rinvulcri, 2002) and many other authors, the advantages of mother tongue have been neglected for a long time. The banishment of the mother tongue then led to its wrong use in L2 classroom. Proving that mother tongue has its use and place in ELT classrooms, publications such as Kerr's *Translation and Own-language Activities* (2014) or *Using the Mother Tongue* (Deller and Rinvulcri, 2002) have been written. As Deller and Rinvulcri (2002) state:

mother tongue (MT), is indeed the mother of the second, third and fourth languages. It is from this womb that the new languages are born in the student's mind, so to exclude MT from the English classroom is like trying to wean a baby on day one of their life. (p. 10)

The authors are not trying to reduce L2 use in the classroom through various activities including L1, but rather make the students less dependent on their own language. Activities including L1 make the learners feel safer in the ELT classroom and accelerate their progress, especially with lower levels. But even the higher levels profit from L1 use in the activities;

they can fully show their linguistic knowledge. It is also stated that the students acquire grammar better, since it is put in the contrast with the grammar of their own language. It is already mentioned above that vocabulary explanation is more comprehensible for students when introduced through their mother tongue. The inclusion of L1 then offers the best use for the linguistic knowledge (of the teacher, as well as of the students) (Deller & Rinvolutri, 2002).

Some activities including L1 focus on all language skills; these are listening, reading, writing and speaking, but also on teaching grammar and vocabulary with the guidance of L1. Others are also focused on the management of the classroom, cooperation of the students or feedback; this shows a good range of varieties on how to incorporate L1 thoroughly in ELT classroom (Deller & Rinvolutri, 2002).

Concrete example of L1 use when teaching grammar may be the following activity: this activity focuses on the difference between various English tenses, e.g., past simple and present perfect. Students stand in groups of four, each group gets two sentences with the tenses; the task of the first person is to translate the sentences into their mother tongue, the second student receives only the translation and tries to translate the sentences back to English, after this round, students together discuss the differences in the tenses and their translations. This activity is more likely to be conducted in the classroom with advanced level. The purpose is to see the differences in the mother tongue and English; the translation may facilitate their understanding of the differences (Deller & Rinvolutri, 2002).

We may use mother tongue to bring students to understanding or to help them develop their skills, the following activity focuses on listening and speaking. The teacher tells a story, in the first round, he/she tells half of the story in the learners' own language, the second part in English; students then discuss what they understood. The second time, the teacher reverses the languages and tells the first part in English, for the second part, the mother tongue is used. Students note down phrases or words they want to remember, in the end, they should be able to retell the story combining the two languages. This activity facilitates the listening task and may help the lower-level students to understand higher level texts (Deller & Rinvolutri, 2002).

The aim of this section was to introduce tools and some activities which include L1. Though L1 is used in the classroom, often the right use is missing. Though research which is focused on L1 use in the classroom centre on the teachers, the students should not be neglected. If they are aware of various tools which combine the two languages such as dictionaries or translators, and they can use them, their language acquisition may become

easier. Language activities including L1 may also be very beneficial, not only they help to create a safer space in ELT classroom, they, again, simplify the learning process. The goal of the various activities and tools is not to reduce the L2 input or output, it is to help the learners with their understanding and acquisition. Their right use provides success in the language classroom.

### III. METHODS

The aim of this chapter is to present a description of the procedure during the research. This chapter deals with the research question, methodology, subjects of the research and process, respectively, in order to provide a detailed explanation of the process.

#### **Research question**

This thesis concentrates on the role of the use of Czech in the ELT classroom. As suggested in the theoretical part, the use of L1 can come from the teacher or from the students. Since the teacher's use of the language influences their students and can facilitate students' learning, it was decided that the practical part was going to be focused on the teachers and their use of L1 within an English classroom. More precisely, the focus is put on the purpose of using L1, in this case Czech language in the L2 (English) lessons. Subsequently, the research questions were formed: For what purposes is L1 used by the particular teacher in ELT classroom? What is the most frequent purpose of a particular teacher's L1 use during the classes? Does the L1 use of a particular teacher differ according to the level of the students?

As demonstrated in the theoretical part, the teachers' use of L1 varies fundamentally from teacher to teacher, thus the purpose of the practical part is to present how L1 is used. The research was, unfortunately, conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic, therefore it was not possible to conduct the research in schools, but it had to be done in online classrooms.

#### **Research methods**

The methods chosen for this thesis were observation and interview. These methods, according to Švaříček et al. (2014), are typical for the qualitative type of research. Observation was conducted in two schools, namely Elementary School and Kindergarten Čestice and Elementary School Janovice. In each school I observed and interviewed one English teacher teaching lower-secondary level English classes. Eight lessons and the language behavior of the teachers from each school were the objects of the observation; therefore, the practical part contains observations of 16 online lessons.

For the monitoring of the lessons, criteria were set, and it was decided what will belong to each criterion. The full specifications of the criteria can be found in the appendix

(see appendix B). The criteria chosen were based on author's knowledge of the ELT online lessons; using only L2 when explaining and checking for understanding of grammar or vocabulary and giving instructions can sometimes lead to misunderstanding, therefore these criteria were chosen. Even in online lessons it is sometimes necessary to maintain discipline and deal with administration, thus these criteria are present as well. Specific criterion is *Using L1 for helping with online tools* which is crucial for the online platforms; the quickest way to deal with new platforms or non-functional devices is to use L1. Among other criteria are encouraging students to speak, supporting and checking the understanding of written texts. Using L1 for translation is not part of the criteria since mostly students translate the texts, not the teacher. The criteria were then divided into core and social functions and sorted according to their aim. The pandemic situation naturally influenced the course of the lesson, e.g., during a normal lesson unit, administration such as whether the microphones or cameras are working would not be necessary. If there was a longer utterance in the Czech language, concerning one topic, it was taken as one entry for the criteria. However, if the teacher was speaking in L2 and used L1 for explaining something shortly, it was also taken as using L1 for a specific purpose during the lessons. Alongside the criteria, notes were made in order to explain briefly what was happening in each lesson and how L1 was used. The criteria and their presence in the lesson are part of each observation in the practical part to achieve a full picture of the lessons and serve as an overview of the teachers' actual use in the lessons.

After observations, both teachers were interviewed with questions covering the topic of L1 use in the ELT classroom. First teacher was interviewed in person, the latter via an online meeting. Both interviews were recorded on the phone in order to do a thorough analysis after. In total, seven questions were asked. The interviews and the questions can be found in the appendix (see appendix A).

## **Subjects**

Since the focus of the practical part of this thesis is on the teachers and their L1 use, the teachers were the main target of the observations. As could be seen above, teachers from two different elementary schools took part in the research. The lessons observed were of the lower-secondary level.

The teacher from ELEM Čestice teaches sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth grades. The teacher is female and has been teaching for ten years; her master's degree is however not

focused on teaching English on lower-secondary level; she studied education for primary schools. The teacher from ELEM Janovice teaches grades seventh and eighth. The second teacher is also a female and has been teaching for one year; her master's degree study was focused on teaching English and German at a lower-secondary level.

Even though the teacher from ELEM Janovice does not teach sixth and ninth grades, the observations from all the lower-secondary grades at ELEM and KDG Čestice are included in the practical part to get a full overview of the lessons.

### **Procedure**

Firstly, the teachers were addressed with a question whether they would like to be a part of the practical part of the thesis. After they agreed, the school principals were contacted and asked for permission to conduct the research on their schools. The schools agreed on being part of the thesis in March 2021. The observations took place in April and May 2021, the interviews in June 2021.

As explained above, the criteria are based on the author's knowledge of ELT lessons, however, one criterion was added after the first observation which was: *using L1 when encouraging English to speak*. Every utterance/word in L1 was taken as an entry for a specific criterion. Longer utterance in L1 was one entry, however, if it was interrupted with English, then the next part in Czech was again taken as one entry.

In order to ensure an authentic result, the teachers were not acquainted with the criteria for observation. Their information was that the research is focused on using L1 in ELT classrooms.

The interviews were conducted in Czech, since both teachers are and as mentioned above, the full transcription of the interviews can be found in the appendix (see appendix A). The teachers were aware of the interview being recorded and agreed to it.

The original plan for the research was to visit the lessons in schools and to collect more data on the L1 use in the ELT classroom. Since the situation around the Covid- 19 pandemic in the Czech Republic did not allow this, all lessons observed were online. There is an uneven number in the observations of the single classes, e.g. The observations of the sixth grade appear more often than those of the seventh grade. Also, the original number of observations was twenty, but in mid-May, the Czech students were allowed to go back to schools, and I was not able to continue with my online observations.

#### IV. PROCESS, RESULTS AND COMMENTARIES

This chapter is dedicated to entries about observations, first the lessons observed at ELEM and KDG Čestice are described, secondly, the lessons at ELEM Janovice. Criteria for observations are present with each lesson, after that, the lessons, and the use of L1 are briefly described. The next part reports on interviews with the two teachers. Observations and interviews are subsequently concluded in the section Key Findings.

##### Elementary School and Kindergarten Čestice

At this school, grades from sixth to ninth were observed. The teacher at this school has been teaching for 10 years but was mainly concentrated on the primary level teaching, she now teaches English on the lower-secondary level and third and sixth grade. The following sections depict the online classes which were observed during April and May 2021.

##### Lesson 1 – sixth grade

The lesson observed is in a sixth grade with 10 students in it. Whole class is divided in the 2 separate English classes, in this one should be the students with the lower level of English.

<b>CORE FUNCTIONS</b>	
<b>Vocabulary:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining vocabulary</i>	
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of vocabulary</i>	
<b>Grammar:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining grammar</i>	
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of grammar</i>	
<b>Texts:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of written instructions/utterances/texts</i>	
<b>SOCIAL FUNCTIONS</b>	
<i>Using L1 for instruction</i>	2x

<i>Using L1 for maintaining discipline in the online classroom and keeping good rapports with the students</i>	3x
<i>Using L1 for administration</i>	1x
<i>Using L1 when helping the students with the online tools</i>	3x
<i>Using L1 when encouraging students to speak/ providing support</i>	2x

During the first minutes of the lessons, L1 was not used at all. The students answered the questions from the teacher, revising the topic they probably discussed the previous lesson. Mother tongue was used only once – when one student struggled with speaking, the teacher encouraged her quickly in Czech.

The lesson continued with the reading in the textbook, the instructions were completely conducted in L2. Again, L1 was only to use to encourage the students to continue with reading. The teacher checked the understanding with questions regarding the text and the students did not translate the text, therefore there was no need to use L1. Subsequently, the teacher instructed the students with homework where she explained the instructions in English and then in Czech. She also praised the kids for their work which was also done in L1.

Lastly, they played a vocabulary game which they were already familiar with and knew what to do and the teacher did not have to explain further what is going to happen. Some students had trouble with signing in and that is where the L1 more was used multiple times in order to help them join the others. Later, the teacher explained again they are going to continue with their work in Czech and she ended the lesson with Czech as well.

## Lesson 2 – sixth grade

<b>CORE FUNCTIONS</b>	
<b>Vocabulary:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining vocabulary</i>	12x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of vocabulary</i>	4x
<b>Grammar:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining grammar</i>	1x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of grammar</i>	
<b>Texts:</b>	



<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of written instructions/utterances/texts</i>	
<b><i>SOCIAL FUNCTIONS</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for instruction</i>	17x
<i>Using L1 for maintaining discipline in the online classroom and keeping good rapports with the students</i>	4x
<i>Using L1 for administration</i>	2x
<i>Using L1 when helping the students with the online tools</i>	2x
<i>Using L1 when encouraging students to speak / providing support</i>	12x

The beginning of the lesson was fully conducted in L1 because the teacher and the class were dealing with homework – this was a longer utterance because the teacher checked the homework with multiple students. They continued with checking the homework and the teacher continued with instructing them in English, one student was not sure what to do and the teacher explained in English. She then made the instructions clear in Czech again.

They worked with the text from the previous lesson and with answers they were supposed to prepare, the phrases were not clear for some students, so the teacher translated most of her questions. The students used the grammar incorrectly in some sentences and the teacher shortly revised the grammar they have already talked about in Czech.

They switched the activity and the teacher asked them questions about their life, she again made the instructions clear in L1. Throughout this activity she helped the students with understanding by using Czech language during translations and instructions. The last questions and answers were only in English.

### **Lesson 3 – sixth grade**

<b><i>CORE FUNCTIONS</i></b>	
<b><i>Vocabulary:</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining vocabulary</i>	6x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of vocabulary</i>	
<b><i>Grammar:</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining grammar</i>	

<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of grammar</i>	
<b>Texts:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of written instructions/utterances/texts</i>	
<b>SOCIAL FUNCTIONS</b>	
<i>Using L1 for instruction</i>	14x
<i>Using L1 for maintaining discipline in the online classroom and keeping good rapports with the students</i>	5x
<i>Using L1 for administration</i>	3x
<i>Using L1 when helping the students with the online tools</i>	
<i>Using L1 when encouraging students to speak/ providing support</i>	11x

This lesson was a revision of the previous topics. Especially in the beginning, Czech language was used for dealing with new textbooks and tests. They worked with a textbook and since it was a revision, L1 was rarely used. When introducing a new activity, the teacher explained it in L1. They were making questions and probably needed more support, so the teacher used L1.

A lot of the students did not respond during the lesson which caused a larger L1 use as the teacher often turned to Czech. They worked with a picture from their books, they often did not respond in full sentences so again were encouraged and helped in Czech.

The last activity was naming things you can have in your room, therefore mostly English was used. Only when asking about specific things, the teacher used L1. The teacher closed the lesson with L1 as well.

#### **Lesson 4 – seventh grade**

The lesson observation took place in the seventh grade with twelve students in the classroom.

<b>CORE FUNCTIONS</b>	
<b>Vocabulary:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining vocabulary</i>	9x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of vocabulary</i>	
<b>Grammar:</b>	

<i>Using L1 for explaining grammar</i>	12x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of grammar</i>	3x
<b>Texts:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of written instructions/utterances/texts</i>	
<b>SOCIAL FUNCTIONS</b>	
<i>Using L1 for instruction</i>	9x
<i>Using L1 for maintaining discipline in the online classroom and keeping good rapports with the students</i>	3x
<i>Using L1 for administration</i>	2x
<i>Using L1 when helping the students with the online tools</i>	1x
<i>Using L1 when encouraging students to speak / providing support</i>	2x

This lesson was focused on grammar and the differences between adjectives and adverbs. The phenomenon was introduced this lesson and the whole introduction into the topic was conducted in Czech language with examples in English.

During the lesson, they worked with various exercises, searched for adjectives and adverbs in a text, the teacher usually added the Czech meaning. The rules were then formulated in Czech from both – the teacher and students as well. The lesson was the last in the online classroom so in the end, they summarized the course of the lessons using L1 only.

### **Lesson 5 – eighth grade**

The next lessons were observed in the eighth grade with 12 students in it. The whole class is again divided into two groups, but here not according to their level of English.

<b>CORE FUNCTIONS</b>	
<b>Vocabulary:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining vocabulary</i>	6x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of vocabulary</i>	5x
<b>Grammar:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining grammar</i>	
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of grammar</i>	

<b>Texts:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of written instructions/utterances/texts</i>	2x
<b>SOCIAL FUNCTIONS</b>	
<i>Using L1 for instruction</i>	23x
<i>Using L1 for maintaining discipline in the online classroom and keeping good rapports with the students</i>	2x
<i>Using L1 for administration</i>	6x
<i>Using L1 when helping the students with the online tools</i>	2x
<i>Using L1 when encouraging students to speak / providing support</i>	4x

The introduction of the lesson was conducted in English. The teacher used English for instructions since she got no response when she spoke English. There was also a problem with the internet connection which was taken as an entry for *using L1 for administration*.

The lesson was focused on giving directions, the vocabulary was already known so the students as well as the teacher used English during the whole activity. There were again problems with connection and the teacher dealt with it in L1. When the students struggled, the teacher supported them with L1. When they switched the activity, the teacher used Czech more since she explained a new activity and new online tool. Also, vocabulary explanation was needed for this activity quite often as well as more detailed instructions, in both cases, the teacher rather turned to L1. In the last part of the lesson, the teacher used L1 more frequently; she explained a long-term activity and what will follow, in order to be clear and concise she decided to use mainly 1.

#### **Lesson 6 - eighth grade**

<b>CORE FUNCTIONS</b>	
<b>Vocabulary:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining vocabulary</i>	14x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of vocabulary</i>	2x
<b>Grammar:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining grammar</i>	1x

<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of grammar</i>	
<b>Texts:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of written instructions/utterances/texts</i>	
<b>SOCIAL FUNCTIONS</b>	
<i>Using L1 for instruction</i>	15x
<i>Using L1 for maintaining discipline in the online classroom and keeping good rapports with the students</i>	2x
<i>Using L1 for administration</i>	3x
<i>Using L1 when helping the students with the online tools</i>	
<i>Using L1 when encouraging students to speak /providing support</i>	15x

The initial part of the lesson where the teacher dealt with the administration was conducted in English, L1 was not used. Then, the teacher did a brainstorming about the topic New York and when eliciting the information, she supported the students with L1.

They continued with working with the text, where Czech was mainly used to introduce new vocabulary. They translated only the necessary parts which required using L1. They came across a grammar phenomenon as well which was then briefly explained by the teacher. They dealt with the text and answered questions where both students and the teacher used L1. When the students struggled, they were supported with Czech. In the last part of the lesson, they answered more questions regarding New York where was mostly English used. The lesson ended in L1.

## **Lesson 7 – ninth grade**

There are twenty students in the ninth grade. They are divided into two groups which are both taught by the same teacher.

<b>CORE FUNCTIONS</b>	
<b>Vocabulary:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining vocabulary</i>	6x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of vocabulary</i>	2x
<b>Grammar:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining grammar</i>	2x

<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of grammar</i>	4x
<b>Texts:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of written instructions/utterances/texts</i>	
<b>SOCIAL FUNCTIONS</b>	
<i>Using L1 for instruction</i>	8x
<i>Using L1 for maintaining discipline in the online classroom and keeping good rapports with the students</i>	2x
<i>Using L1 for administration</i>	2x
<i>Using L1 when helping the students with the online tools</i>	
<i>Using L1 when encouraging students to speak / providing support</i>	8x

In the beginning of the lesson, the teacher used mainly Czech language because they were dealing with some administration work. In this lesson, the students revised for the test so the whole lesson was based on a page in a textbook.

L1 was used mainly for making the instructions clear and for checking the understanding of the given grammar. Since the students were already familiar with most of the new items and new grammar, they were mostly capable to explain the given phenomena without the teacher's guidance. They dealt with fill-in exercises where Czech was rarely used. The students needed more support during a picture description which was provided by the teacher in L1. The last part of the lesson was again in Czech.

### **Lesson 8 – ninth grade**

<b>CORE FUNCTIONS</b>	
<b>Vocabulary:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining vocabulary</i>	3x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of vocabulary</i>	1x
<b>Grammar:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining grammar</i>	1x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of grammar</i>	3x
<b>Texts:</b>	

<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of written instructions/utterances/texts</i>	
<b>SOCIAL FUNCTIONS</b>	
<i>Using L1 for instruction</i>	6x
<i>Using L1 for maintaining discipline in the online classroom and keeping good rapports with the students</i>	1x
<i>Using L1 for administration</i>	2x
<i>Using L1 when helping the students with the online tools</i>	
<i>Using L1 when encouraging students to speak / providing support</i>	5x

This lesson was the same as the previous, only with a different group of learners. What stayed the same were the administration's matters which were conducted in Czech in the beginning and at the end of the lesson.

In this lesson, the L1 was used less frequently which also reflects on the criteria. Especially during instructions, the teacher explained in both languages, and she sometimes offered support by encouraging the students in L1.

### Elementary School Janovice

At this school, grades seventh and eighth were observed. The teacher at this school has been teaching for 1 year. Her specialization is English and German language for lower secondary level. This section comments on classes observed during April and May 2021.

#### Lesson 1 – seventh grade

This seventh grade comprises of 22 students who are not divided into smaller groups. According to their teacher, they are mostly lower-level students.

<b>CORE FUNCTIONS</b>	
<b>Vocabulary:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining vocabulary</i>	3x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of vocabulary</i>	
<b>Grammar:</b>	

<i>Using L1 for explaining grammar</i>	8x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of grammar</i>	1x
<b><i>Texts:</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of written instructions/utterances/texts</i>	
<b><i>SOCIAL FUNCTIONS</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for instruction</i>	27x
<i>Using L1 for maintaining discipline in the online classroom and keeping good rapports with the students</i>	5x
<i>Using L1 for administration</i>	4x
<i>Using L1 when helping the students with the online tools</i>	
<i>Using L1 when encouraging students to speak / providing support</i>	18x

In the beginning of the lesson, the teacher spoke mainly Czech since they were dealing with administration. She began with a topic which was not familiar to the students so when eliciting the information, she chose Czech language, switching between Czech and English. They were dealing with phrases and grammar.

Instructions were always translated throughout the lesson. In case of any misunderstanding, the teacher turned to Czech immediately. Some of the instructions were not uttered in English at all. The end of the lesson was again conducted in L1, the teacher summarized the lesson and the work the students were supposed to do.

## **Lesson 2 – seventh grade**

<b><i>CORE FUNCTIONS</i></b>	
<b><i>Vocabulary:</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining vocabulary</i>	1x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of vocabulary</i>	17x
<b><i>Grammar:</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining grammar</i>	2x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of grammar</i>	
<b><i>Texts:</i></b>	



<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of written instructions/utterances/texts</i>	
<b><i>SOCIAL FUNCTIONS</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for instruction</i>	8x
<i>Using L1 for maintaining discipline in the online classroom and keeping good rapports with the students</i>	3x
<i>Using L1 for administration</i>	8x
<i>Using L1 when helping the students with the online tools</i>	
<i>Using L1 when encouraging students to speak / providing support</i>	9x

The introduction into the lesson was done in L2, however, again, there were some administration matters to deal with and the teacher switched to L1. After the initial part where both the students and the teacher used only English. After that they revised on a test where, again, it was probably more convenient for the teacher to use L1. They revised once again the vocabulary; the teacher used a lot of L1 in order to check whether the students know the English equivalents.

They continued practicing the already known vocabulary which the teacher supported with pictures and L1 was rarely used. When they switched the activities, the instructions were presented in Czech and English. This was also the case in the closing activity. Last part of the lesson was again dealing with homework and the course of the next lessons, conducted in Czech.

### **Lesson 3 – seventh grade**

<b><i>CORE FUNCTIONS</i></b>	
<b><i>Vocabulary:</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining vocabulary</i>	16x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of vocabulary</i>	6x
<b><i>Grammar:</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining grammar</i>	2x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of grammar</i>	
<b><i>Texts:</i></b>	

<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of written instructions/utterances/texts</i>	2x
<b>SOCIAL FUNCTIONS</b>	
<i>Using L1 for instruction</i>	16x
<i>Using L1 for maintaining discipline in the online classroom and keeping good rapports with the students</i>	3x
<i>Using L1 for administration</i>	3x
<i>Using L1 when helping the students with the online tools</i>	
<i>Using L1 when encouraging students to speak / providing support</i>	10x

The lesson began in Czech mainly because the teacher was giving feedback on tests. She revised on the grammar topic and again explained in Czech again. The grammar explanation and tests correction lasted longer period of time, sometimes interrupted with English.

They worked with a text from the textbook and the teacher shared a listening exercise. During the instructions she switched between Czech and English. The text was also present in the textbook and the next task of the students was to translate it. Naturally, the teacher switched to Czech multiple times when supplying vocabulary. The last task was to practice responses to various statements, during the explanation or when supplying the needed words, the teacher used L1 as well. The lesson was concluded in L2.

#### **Lesson 4 – seventh grade**

<b>CORE FUNCTIONS</b>	
<b>Vocabulary:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining vocabulary</i>	5x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of vocabulary</i>	12x
<b>Grammar:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining grammar</i>	2x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of grammar</i>	2x
<b>Texts:</b>	
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of written instructions/utterances/texts</i>	2x

<b><i>SOCIAL FUNCTIONS</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for instruction</i>	17x
<i>Using L1 for maintaining discipline in the online classroom and keeping good rapports with the students</i>	8x
<i>Using L1 for administration</i>	3x
<i>Using L1 when helping the students with the online tools</i>	
<i>Using L1 when encouraging students to speak / providing support</i>	5x

Immediately after introduction in English, the teacher explained an activity focused on revising vocabulary in Czech, she varied the languages throughout the explanations, the aim was to check their understanding and knowledge of vocabulary.

After the first activity, the students read the instructions in their textbooks and the teacher rephrased them in Czech. They came across some unknown words which the teacher explained in Czech, during the activity she used Czech language to maintain discipline in lesson or to give instructions. The aim of the text was grammar so an explanation of the grammar in L1 followed; it was rather a long utterance. Last task was a grammar exercise, the languages again varied throughout the instructions and explanation.

### **Lesson 5 – eighth grade**

The eighth grade at ELEM Janovice is visited by 17 students; the teacher stated that this class is bit more advanced.

<b><i>CORE FUNCTIONS</i></b>	
<b><i>Vocabulary:</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining vocabulary</i>	9x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of vocabulary</i>	
<b><i>Grammar:</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining grammar</i>	9x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of grammar</i>	3x
<b><i>Texts:</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of written instructions/utterances/texts</i>	

<b><i>SOCIAL FUNCTIONS</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for instruction</i>	4x
<i>Using L1 for maintaining discipline in the online classroom and keeping good rapports with the students</i>	
<i>Using L1 for administration</i>	4x
<i>Using L1 when helping the students with the online tools</i>	
<i>Using L1 when encouraging students to speak / providing support</i>	6x

In the beginning of the lesson, the teacher dealt with administration in L1. They worked on grammar exercise from previous lesson, so except few short utterances in Czech, the activity was conducted in L2.

The next activity was introduced in L2 as well, only accompanied with few short explanations and reminders of the given grammar in L1. Next activity, which included practicing, was introduced in both languages. The activity continued in L2, however, in the middle, there seemed to be a problem with connection and the teacher handled it in L1. Czech was used in order to support the students or to explain vocabulary/grammar again. Last task was a fill in exercise, instructions were again presented in both languages. Closing part of the lesson was informing the students about a test they were going to write.

## **Lesson 6 – eighth grade**

<b><i>CORE FUNCTIONS</i></b>	
<b><i>Vocabulary:</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining vocabulary</i>	7x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of vocabulary</i>	13x
<b><i>Grammar:</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining grammar</i>	
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of grammar</i>	
<b><i>Texts:</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of written instructions/utterances/texts</i>	2x
<b><i>SOCIAL FUNCTIONS</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for instruction</i>	12x

<i>Using L1 for maintaining discipline in the online classroom and keeping good rapports with the students</i>	5x
<i>Using L1 for administration</i>	3x
<i>Using L1 when helping the students with the online tools</i>	2x
<i>Using L1 when encouraging students to speak/ supplying support</i>	1x

The initial part of the lesson included administration and instructions. Students revised the vocabulary using online tools which required some help from the teacher in L1. In the next part, students worked in their textbooks, the instructions required some L1 use from the teacher. In the following task, the students listened to a track from their textbook, the instructions on what to do were supplied in both languages.

They checked the understanding, mostly in L2, though sometimes in order to explain something briefly, the teacher used L1 as well. Another task was again in the textbook, instructions were again a mix of L1 and L2.

Last task was to check the exercise the students worked on; the teacher used L1 for checking the answers, explaining vocabulary or jokes. The teacher concluded the lesson in Czech, telling the students about a test.

## **Lesson 7 – eighth grade**

<b><i>CORE FUNCTIONS</i></b>	
<b><i>Vocabulary:</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining vocabulary</i>	4x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of vocabulary</i>	17x
<b><i>Grammar:</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining grammar</i>	7x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of grammar</i>	3x
<b><i>Texts:</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of written instructions/utterances/texts</i>	3x
<b><i>SOCIAL FUNCTIONS</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for instruction</i>	12x

<i>Using L1 for maintaining discipline in the online classroom and keeping good rapports with the students</i>	1x
<i>Using L1 for administration</i>	2x
<i>Using L1 when helping the students with the online tools</i>	2x
<i>Using L1 when encouraging students to speak / providing support</i>	4x

The initial activity was again based on revision of the vocabulary, it was the same revision activity as the previous observed lesson; this time they practiced a different set of words. Some students again needed some support when using the online tool. The instructions were given in L1.

When instructing the students about the next activity, the teacher switched between the languages, especially when the students did not understand the assignment. After the work with the text, the teacher put the focus on grammar, what followed was rather long explanation of the grammar in L1. The students practiced the grammar in the next exercise where the teacher from time to time clarified the given grammar in Czech again or the vocabulary. The last two minutes of the lesson, only L1 was used in order to deal with administration, homework, and the course of the lesson.

## Lesson 8 – eighth grade

<b><i>CORE FUNCTIONS</i></b>	
<b><i>Vocabulary:</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining vocabulary</i>	9x
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of vocabulary</i>	6x
<b><i>Grammar:</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for explaining grammar</i>	
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of grammar</i>	
<b><i>Texts:</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for checking the understanding of written instructions/utterances/texts</i>	2x
<b><i>SOCIAL FUNCTIONS</i></b>	
<i>Using L1 for instruction</i>	12x

<i>Using L1 for maintaining discipline in the online classroom and keeping good rapports with the students</i>	7x
<i>Using L1 for administration</i>	3x
<i>Using L1 when helping the students with the online tools</i>	
<i>Using L1 when encouraging students to speak / providing support</i>	9x

The last lesson observed in eighth grade began with a feedback on the tests, except the initial part in L2, where the teacher greeted the students, was the predominant language Czech. The teacher discussed with the students, using L1 mainly for administration (two long utterances) or keeping the good rapports with the students.

They continued with work from previous lesson; the teacher switched the languages again in order to give instructions. The students interrupted the teacher quite frequently during this lesson, so the teacher used Czech to maintain the discipline in the lesson which worked really efficiently.

First, the students answered questions to a text, subsequently they translated the text; during the translation, the teacher encouraged the students in Czech, sometimes helped with translation of single words or phrases. During the follow up activities the teacher sometimes provided support in L1 in order to help the students to fill in the exercises. The lesson ended in L1, assigning the students the homework, and saying goodbye.

### **Interviews with the teachers**

Both teachers have the same opinion about using L1 in the ELT classroom; they think L1 belongs to the classroom. However, the teacher from ELEM and KDG Čestice (further TA) noted that her opinion was different just a few years ago. Her opinion now is that using L1 is time saving and facilitates teaching grammar. Teacher from ELEM Janovice (further TB) thinks it is necessary to use L1, especially in mixed ability classes. Both teachers also agree on the beneficial role of L1 during grammar explanations. TA also added that especially problems with behavior are better to be solved in Czech. TB thinks that L1 helps her with instructions and tasks; using L1 clarifies the understanding.

TA has certain rules about using L1. She especially tries to not use L1 during vocabulary presentation. According to her opinion, students should only have the English version presented, not mixing it with Czech meanings; presentation of the vocabulary with words or gestures is more convenient for her. On the other hand, TB finds it beneficial to

use L1 in various language areas and she specifically mentioned using it for vocabulary and translation.

When asked about how much they try to avoid L1 in their lessons on a scale from 1-5 (1-not at all, 5 – always) TA said 4, though she thinks that during the lessons it is more likely 2 to 3. TB stated that it depends on the class; in more advanced classes she tries to avoid L1 a lot (4), in classes with mixed-ability students and less advanced classes she rather turns to Czech (2).

When something is unclear, the teachers have contrasting stances. TA rather uses different words and rephrases the instructions, only when she sees students do not understand at all, she uses L1. TB claims she rather turns to Czech straight away, however, she would like to limit her L1 use.

The teachers also hold opposed opinions about negative transfer from Czech to English. TA believes that Czech use sometimes leads to misunderstanding in vocabulary (they match the meanings incorrectly). She is also against translations during learning. TB is of the different view. According to her, there is not a negative transfer from Czech to English, but she stated that using the L1 less would bring better English proficiency to her students.

It is obvious from the interviews that both teachers hold mostly positive opinions about L1 in the classroom. However, based on the interview, especially TB finds it beneficial and is more inclined to L1 use in her lessons. Both of the teachers also try to avoid L1, but it can be seen in the lessons' observations, the L1 use (especially when giving instructions) is common. Though they have quite different stances about L1 use when something is unclear, the observations of the lessons show that their use is not that different. Though TA stated that L1 can sometimes have negative impact on L2, especially in the field of vocabulary, she also uses L1 when explaining vocabulary.

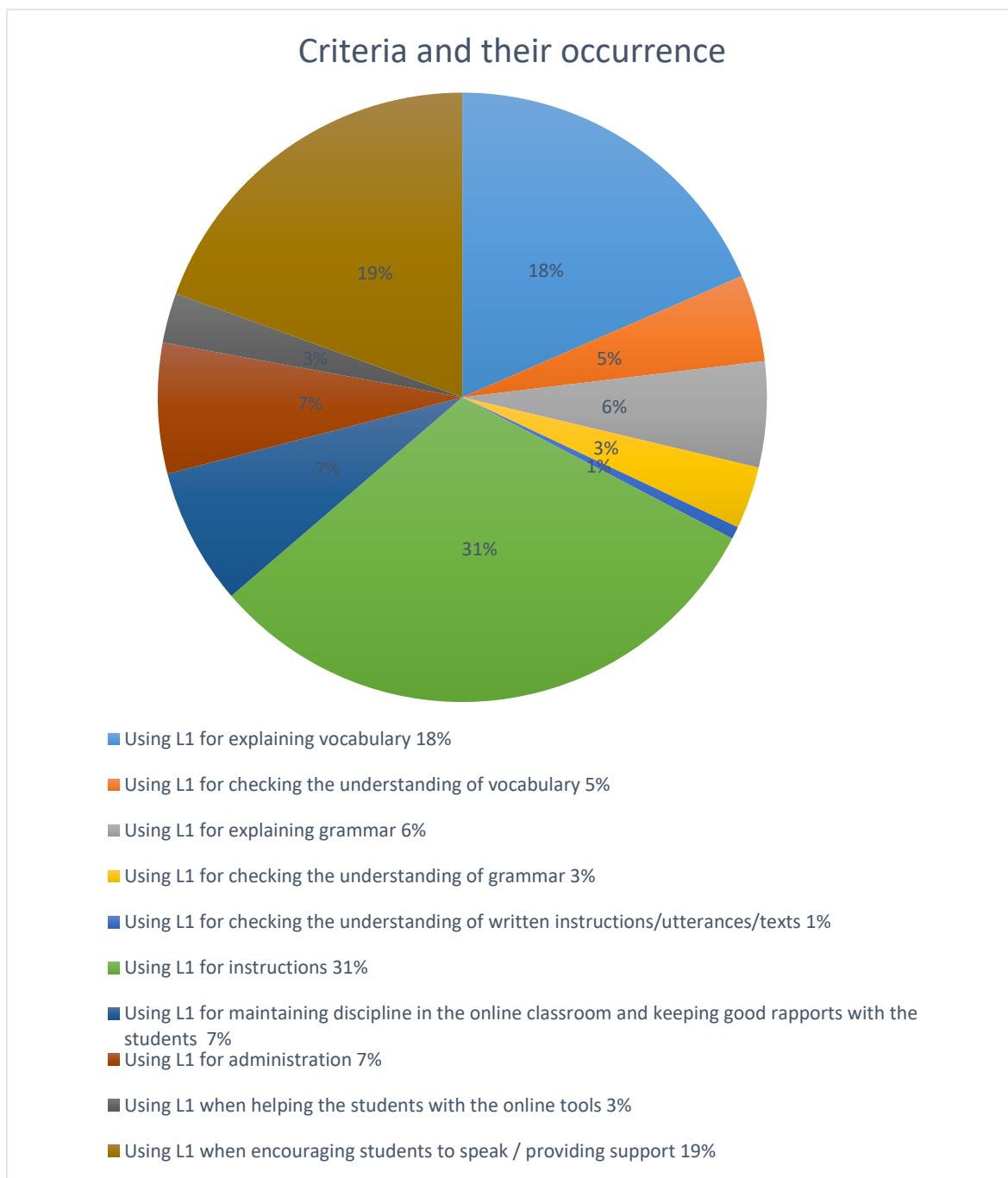
### **Key Findings**

It is evident from the results of the observations that both teachers, who were a part of this research, include L1 and L2 in their lessons. The use of L1 differs from lesson to lesson and even in the same lessons (see ninth grade – ELEM and KDG Čestice) the use is different. The teachers' attitudes towards L1 use correlate with their use with learners.



## Teacher A

Firstly, this section deals with the results of the teacher from ELEM AND KDG Čestice (TA). The presence of the criteria and their occurrence appears in the overall graph below:



*Graph 1: Occurrence of criteria in the lessons of TA*

As can be seen in the overall graph, every criterion appeared in the lessons at least once. Therefore, it can be stated that in the case of TA L1 is used for covering mainly areas of grammar and vocabulary concerning the core functions. The criterion of *using L1 for*

*checking the understanding of written instructions/utterances/texts* has a truly little percentage in the overall graph and appears on the last position. In terms of the social functions, L1 covers the fields of instructions, maintaining discipline, administration and is used when students are encouraged to speak. The representation of the criterion *Using L1 when helping students with the online tools* appears on the last position in the occurrence concerning social functions. This paragraph therefore answers the first research question: For what purposes is L1 used by the particular teacher in ELT classroom?

The second question sounds: What is the most frequent purpose of a particular teacher's L1 use during the classes? This question can be also easily answered with the help of the graph; the most common purpose for L1 use of the teacher A is *using L1 for giving instructions*; its occurrence is 31%.

The third research question required calculating the average of each criterion used in each grade in order to determine whether the L1 use differs according to the level of the students; five main criteria which appeared in each lesson were chosen in order to help to answer this question. The averages per lesson of the specific criteria can be seen in the table below:

*Table 1:* The average use of criteria of TA

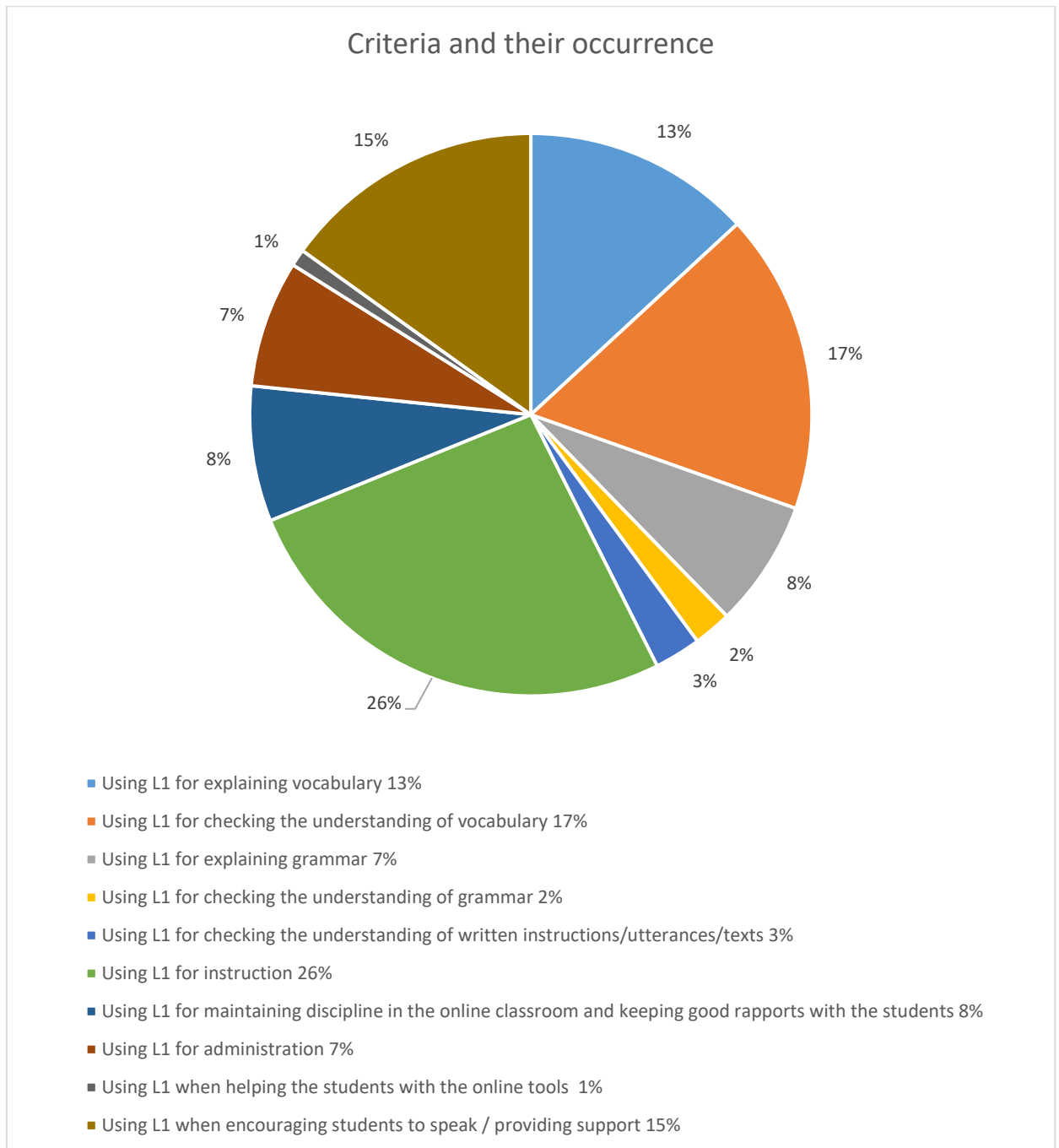
	6 <sup>th</sup> grade	7 <sup>th</sup> grade	8 <sup>th</sup> grade	9 <sup>th</sup> grade
Using L1 for explaining vocabulary	9x	9x	10x	4.5x
Using L1 for explaining grammar	1x	12x	1x	1.5x
Using L1 for instructions	11x	9x	19x	7x
Using L1 for administration	2x	2x	4.5x	2x
Using L1 when encouraging the students to speak/providing support	8.3x	2x	9.5x	6.5x

It is obvious from the table above that the L1 use of the TA does not differ dramatically throughout the lower secondary level. Slightly lower numbers can be sometimes seen in ninth grade, and sometimes seventh, but only one lesson was observed there. However, and especially, the L1 use in sixth and eighth grade (where are students with different levels of English) almost does not differ and it is possible to state the answer to the

last question: though there are usually minor differences in L1 use, it can be read from the charts that the level of the students does not influence the L1 use significantly.

## Teacher B

This section deals with the results of the teacher from ELEM Janovice (further TB). The presence of the criteria and their occurrence appears in the overall graph below:



Graph 2: Occurrence of criteria in the lessons of TB

The first research question (For what purposes is L1 used by the particular teacher in ELT classroom?) can be answered with the following paragraph: Every criterion appeared at least few times in the lessons of TB; thus, similar conclusion as the conclusion of the first teacher can be stated. In the case of TB L1 is used for covering mainly areas of vocabulary and the checking the understanding of the vocabulary (17%), as well as explaining grammar (7%) concerning the core functions. The criterion *Using L1 for checking the understanding of written instructions/ utterances/ texts* appears again on the last position. Using L1 for social functions such as instructions, maintaining discipline or encouraging the students also appeared often during the lessons. *Using L1 for helping the students with the online tools* appears on the last position.

The second question regarding the most common purpose of L1 use is easily determinable with the help of the graph: the most frequent purpose of the TB for using L1 is giving instructions (26%).

The answer to the third research question again requires the averages of the five main criteria.

*Table 2: The average use of criteria of TB*

	7 <sup>th</sup> grade	8 <sup>th</sup> grade
Using L1 for explaining vocabulary	6.25x	7.25x
Using L1 for explaining grammar	3.5x	4x
Using L1 for instructions	17x	10x
Using L1 for administration	4.5x	3x
Using L1 when encouraging the students to speak/providing support	10.5x	5x

In the lessons of the teacher B, the criteria and the average of their occurrence differ slightly. The biggest differences can be seen in *Using L1 for instructions* and *Using L1 when encouraging the students/providing support*. During other chosen criteria, the L1 use stays mostly the same and therefore a similar conclusion can be drawn upon these results; there can be slight differences seen between the L1 use in the seventh and eighth grade, however, most of the time the level of the students does not seem to influence the L1 use of the TB.

## Comparison

Some similar conclusions can be drawn upon the results from both teachers. The most frequent purpose for L1 use is instructions; the occurrence by teacher A is 31 % and by teacher B it is 26%. Using L1 for instructions may sometimes seem easier, especially when the students do not understand, it is also time-saving and clear what the teachers want the students to do. Both teachers also use L1 frequently when it comes to encouraging their students; TA 19% in her overall graph, TB 15% in her overall graph. When it comes to the third research question, similar results were also concluded; the frequency of L1 use did not vary much according to the level of the students (there were some exceptions which can be explained by the limited number of the observed lessons).

Generally, it can be stated that the results are quite similar. There were some differences in the occurrence of the criteria, e.g., TB often uses L1 when checking for understanding of vocabulary (15% in the overall graph), TA rarely (5% occurrence in the overall graph). Differences can also be found in using L1 for explaining vocabulary; even though TA stated in the interview that especially when teaching vocabulary, she tries to limit it and thinks it does not belong to ELT classroom, her percentage is 5% higher (18%) than by TB (13%).

This chapter comments on the results of the research. The specific findings of each lesson observed, as well as a brief commentary about the course of the lessons, can be found in the section above. The next chapter informs about pedagogical implications based on this research.

## V. IMPLICATIONS

This section comments on possible pedagogical implications based on the research made about L1 use in the ELT classroom. It is also concerned with limitations of the research and suggestions for another research to be made.

### **Pedagogical Implications**

The research's results are based on the teacher's L1 use within a language classroom. As mentioned above, the teachers use language in various areas in the language classroom such as vocabulary explanation, grammar, instructions, administration etc.

Based on the results, it is clear that L1 is used the most for instructions, on the other hand, both teachers stated that they would like to limit their L1 use. It may seem that using L1 is time-saving and clear, but in order to ensure a proper language learning, the L1 use should be limited where it is not necessary, for that, the teachers may try to use various techniques mentioned in the theoretical part of the thesis; these techniques would facilitate implementing L1 into ELT classes and also help to increase L2. It was also mentioned that teachers are usually not familiar with these techniques, e.g., sandwiching. This technique would be definitely useful in long term use and would probably lower the L1 use during instructions. Keeping the record of the known instructions would also be useful since the teacher would not have to repeat the meaning of the same instructions over and over again. To use mother tongue consciously would require knowing these techniques and could bring the desired result of using L1 less.

Using L1 may be beneficial, as suggested in the theoretical part. It was clear during the observations as well as in the interviews that both teachers tend to turn to L1 when explaining grammar, it makes it more comprehensible for the students and since explained in Czech, it was not necessary to repeat the explanation multiple times in both languages. Therefore, in the field of grammar, L1 use may be welcomed.

Also, the Czech language used in order to maintain discipline or to simply joke with the students proved to be useful; it lightened up the mood and usually seemed to work on the students which is confirmed in the theoretical part where is stated that using L1 sometimes can make the students feel safer. Using L1 from time to time proved to be useful and does not have to be avoided at all costs, since it offers certain benefits; it helps to create

a better learning environment and may be a good tool for explanations. Still, the highest L2 exposure is considered important.

This section provides information about possible implications which could be helpful for the teachers who implement both languages into their lessons. The research part of the thesis brings results which confirm some statements in the theoretical part. Teacher should still think about their L1 use, even though it is not an obstacle in students learning and try to limit it. For that, various techniques were described in the theoretical part which can help both, students, and the teachers. There are moments during which using L1 is time- saving, efficient and helps in order to maintain a learning environment in the classroom.

### **Limitations of the Research**

Although the research has introduced a significant number of observed lessons and results provide an outlook and analysis of the observed lessons, still there are some limitations which should be considered. In order to confirm or deny the conclusions based on the research, a larger number of lessons and observed teachers would be needed. Both teachers stated that they use L1 in their classes so a different sample or a variety of the teachers would provide a more authentic result. Therefore, the result is limited since the number of the observed teachers is limited as well.

Certain criteria were difficult to specify; what the author considers to be *Using L1 for giving instructions* could be considered *Using L1 when encouraging the students* by a different author; thus, matching the single utterances to the criteria could also differ from one observer to another.

Originally, the assumption was to conduct the research in real life classes. The online classes have their specifications as well which could be reflected on the results. The teacher can talk less or more in L1 in their normal lessons and may use it for various areas, therefore, the validity of the data collected does not have to be applicable to lessons which take place in schools.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

In order to conduct a proper analysis of the L1 use within ELT classroom, and as indicated above, a greater sample of teachers and lessons would be needed. Convenient also would be to have an even number of each grade observed to have a truly authentic research

result. Also, the obvious suggestion is to conduct this type of research in schools, not in online classrooms.

Another suggestion would be to focus the research on the students as well; how they perceive the L1 use from the teacher and what are their preferences. Alongside with this research could also be compared the teachers' answers and attitudes towards L1. Students are the focus of the language lesson so having them as the objectives would be a helpful insight.

The mother tongue can have various roles in the classroom; the role it plays just in the field of vocabulary could also be an interesting topic of a thesis; to focus on whether the students truly need L1 to understand the vocabulary needed. The same could be applied to grammar explanations, translation etc. The suggestion for yet another research is to focus on negative transfer from L1 to L2 and the impact it has on the learning.

This chapter provided pedagogical implications which could be useful during teaching practice as well as research limitations and suggestions for another research covering the same topic. The next, final chapter concludes on the whole thesis.



## VI. CONCLUSION

This work is concerned with the use of L1 in ELT classrooms. The stances towards L1 have varied significantly through time; in former times and almost throughout the whole 20<sup>th</sup> century, L1 was not welcomed in the ELT classroom. However, recent attitudes look at L1 use differently; it is believed that using L1 in the ELT classroom may benefit the students and help in second language acquisition.

The theoretical part of the thesis supplied the necessary information for the research. Whether we want to or not, L1 undoubtedly plays its part in the language learning. Its functions were even divided into core and social functions which the own language can fulfill in the classroom. Still, negative outlooks on the L1 use appear; the mother tongue use in ELT classroom was discussed to great extent; still, it was not proven what is actually the most suitable for the learners or what is the optimal use of L1; there are still researches to be made in the future. Implementing L1 in the lessons may seem controversial and there are still debates surrounding this topic, e.g., the negative transfer of L1 patterns to L2 may happen. Usually, the counterarguments against the L1 use were dismissed. Using L1 brings also benefits; it helps to establish better relationships with the students and to create a safer learning environment, on top of that all, using L1 may be useful in some language areas such as explaining grammar.

Furthermore, the theory is dedicated to teachers and the general description of their view; though many teachers try to avoid L1, they do not succeed in doing so, according to multiple researches. The frequency of the teachers' L1 use leads even to the feeling of guilt by many. Students' view of the L1 use are also discussed. The theoretical part also contains practical tips for implementing both languages (own and target).

The research was focused on two teachers; their outcomes are described separately and subsequently compared. However, there were some similarities found in their use of L1 in the ELT classroom. Both teachers observed include both languages, Czech and English, in their lessons. For the observations, 10 criteria were set with the aim to discover for what purpose is Czech language used the most; the goal was also to discover what other purposes are frequently used. Czech language is used mainly for instructions (*Using L1 for instructions* has the highest occurrence in both teacher's graphs), but very frequently also when encouraging students to speak. The focus was also to establish whether the L1 use differs according to the level of the students; here, the results were again very similar and as can be seen above, the level of the students usually does not seem to influence the use of L1.

Even though using L1 in the ELT classroom is currently not seen as an obstacle in the students learning, the teachers should always be careful with the use. Still, the rule in the ELT classrooms is that students need the highest exposure to L2 possible. Using L1 sometimes may seem easier, but it should be used consciously with the knowledge of the purposes, techniques, and activities suitable.

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## APPENDICES

### Interviews – APPENDIX A

1. Patří rodný jazyk do výuky anglického jazyka?  
Does the mother tongue have its place in second language learning?
2. Proč? Proč ne?  
Why? Why not?
3. Kde je pro Vás nepříhodnější používat mateřský jazyk?  
When is it the most convenient for you to use the mother tongue?
4. Kde si naopak myslíte, že by se neměl používat?  
On the other hand, when do you think it should not be used?
5. Na škále 1-5 (1- vůbec ne, 5- neustále) jak moc se snažíte vyhýbat mateřskému jazyku ve vašich hodinách?  
On a scale from 1 to 5 (1-not at all, 5- always), how much do you try to avoid the L1 use?
6. Snažíte se český jazyk omezit, nebo jakmile něco není jasné, volíte rovnou jazyk mateřský?  
Do you try to limit the L1 use, or do you immediately switch to L1 when something is not clear?
7. Myslíte si, že používání mateřského jazyka způsobuje negativní přenos vzorů/jazykové stavby do jazyka anglického?  
Do you think that using the L1 causes the negative transfer of language patterns to L2 (English)?

TA = ELEM and KDG Čestice

TB = ELEM Janovice

1. TA Dříve jsem si myslela, že rodný jazyk do výuky cizích jazyků nepatří. Teď si myslím, že ano a jsou situace, kdy tam patří.  
I used to think that the mother tongue does not belong to second language learning. Now, I think it does and there are situations where it belongs.  
TB Myslím, že ano.  
I think it does.

2. TA Usnadní to vysvětlování třeba gramatiky, navíc ušetří čas občas něco vysvětlit v češtině.

It facilitates grammar explanations, on top of that it is time saving to explain certain phenomena in English.

TB Je třeba určité věci vysvětlit česky, tak aby to studenti pochopili a opravdu rozuměli. Obzvlášť ve třídách, kde jsou studenti horší a lepší (mixed ability). Jen v angličtině by to nemuseli všichni pochopit.

It is necessary to explain certain things in Czech so that the students would understand. Especially in mixed ability classes. They probably would not understand everything just in English.

3. TA Při vysvětlování gramatiky, při kázeňských problémech, kde vidím, že mi nerozumí a něco potřebuji vyřešit rychle.

When explaining grammar, when dealing with behavior issues, when I see they don't understand, and I need to deal with things quickly.

TB Když chci, aby něco pochopili. Zejména při vysvětlování právě gramatiky. I kontrola zadání, jestli rozumí, je dobré to říct česky a nechat si zopakovat. Při zadávání úkolů mi také přijde příhodné používat češtinu, vím pak, že práci pochopí. When I want them to understand something. Especially when explaining grammar. When checking the understanding of instructions; it is good to say it in Czech and let them repeat the instructions. I find it useful to use Czech when assigning homework; I know that everything is clear.

4. TA Nevím, jestli by se neměl používat, ale já L1 nerada používám při prezentaci nových slovíček, snažím se to nespojovat s češtinou, chci, aby si to zapamatovali jen anglicky. Používám obrázky nebo gesta, nebo cokoliv jiného.

I do not know whether it should not be used, but I do not like to use L1 when presenting new vocabulary items; I try to exclude Czech, I want them to remember just the English word. I use pictures, gestures, or anything suitable.

TB Nevím, podle mě má všude své místo – u slovíček, překladů. Ne vždy, ale někdy ano.

I do not know, I think L1 has its place in every area – vocabulary, translations. Not always, but sometimes.

5. TA Čtyři, daří se mi to ale spíše 2-3.

Four, but I think it is more two to three.

TB Jak kdy, záleží na třídě. Když vím, že je třída šikovná a bude rozumět všemu, co já říkám, tak se snažím L1 vyhýbat na škále čtyři. U horších a pomalejších tříd se snažím L1 vyhýbat méně, tak dva.

It depends on the class. When I see they are more advanced and will understand what I am saying, then on the scale the number is four. In lower-level classes I try to avoid L1 less, probably two.

6. TA Vždy se nejdřív snažím, říct to jinými slovy a pomoci si. Když vidím, že to stejně nejde, skočím do mateřského jazyka.

I always try to rephrase. When I see it does not work, then I use the mother tongue.

TB Skáču rovnou do češtiny, chtěla bych se snažit to omezit.

I immediately switch to Czech; I would like to limit it.

7. TA Já si myslím, že ano. Myslím, že si slova pak mohou spojit špatně. Navíc si myslím, že učit se překlady je pak brzdi. Ale striktně se češtině nevyhýbám.

I think it does. They can match the meanings incorrectly then. Also, I think that learning to translate is slowing the students down.

TB To si nemyslím. Spíš si myslím, že kdybych používala anglický jazyk víc, budou více umět a mít více naposloucháno. Ale myslím, že čeština angličtinu neomezuje.

I do not think so. But I think that if I used English more, they would learn more and would have more listening. But I don't think that the Czech language limits the English language.

## Specifications of the criteria – APPENDIX B

CORE FUNCTIONS
<b>Vocabulary:</b>
Using L1 for explaining vocabulary = vysvětlení slovíček, frází, vysvětlování, kdy se jaké slovo hodí, pomoc s překladem textu pro studenty
Explaining the words, phrases, explaining when a certain word is suitable, helping with translations of the texts
Using L1 for checking the understanding of vocabulary = otázky typu: rozumíte tomu? Jak se řekne anglicky...? Přeložte...



Questions such as Do you understand? How would you say it in English? Could you translate...?
<b>Grammar:</b>
Using L1 for explaining grammar = vysvětlování a upřesňování gramatiky – během aktivit, I jako samostatné vysvětlení nové látky Explaining grammar phenomena, making the grammar clear, either during activities or when introducing a new language item
Using L1 for checking the understanding of grammar = otázky typu: rozumíte tomu? Jak bys to řekl/a svými slovy? Questions such as Do you understand? How would you say it in your words?
<b>Texts:</b>
Using L1 for checking the understanding of written instructions/utterances/texts = Co stálo v textu? Co máte dělat podle zadání? O čem byl text, který jste četli? What was in the text? According to the instructions, what are you supposed to do? What was the text about?
<b>SOCIAL FUNCTIONS</b>
Using L1 for instruction = instrukce typu: otevřete si učebnici, cvičení x na straně x, sedněte si, poslouchajte, Víte, co máte dělat? Máte hotovo? atd. Instructions such as open your book, exercise x on the page x, sit down, listen, do you know what to do? Are you done? etc.
Using L1 for maintaining discipline in the online classroom and keeping good rapports with the students = vtípy, proslovy mimo téma hodiny, upozorňování na nevhodné chování Jokes, utterances outside the topic of the lesson, dealing with inappropriate behavior
Using L1 for administration = docházka, testy, zapínání kamer, mikrofonů, instrukce k domácím úkolům, odevzdávání,... Attendance, tests, cameras, microphones, instructions concerning homework, turning in the work...
Using L1 when helping the students with the online tools = práce s online nástroji, aplikacemi a jejich vysvětlení Instructions on how to work with online tools, applications and explaining how to work with them
Using L1 when encouraging students to speak / providing support = většinou slova podpory např: ano, pokračuj, výborně,...

Usually, words of encouragement such as yes, continue, excellent...

## SUMMARY IN CZECH

Tato diplomová práce pojednává o roli mateřského jazyka ve výuce cizích jazyků. Učitel a jeho používání jazyka přirozeně ovlivňuje jeho studenty; tím pádem bylo ustanoveno, že učitel bude hlavním předmětem této práce. I přes to, že není nutné mateřský jazyk z hodin cizího jazyka vyloučit úplně, učitel by si měl být vědom jeho užití tak, aby svým studentům představil hlavně jazyk cizí a podpořil tím jeho osvojení. Diplomová práce začíná teoretickým úvodem, který se zaměřuje na roli mateřského jazyka a přístupům k němu v hodinách cizích jazyků. Práce dále představuje i praktické aktivity a techniky, které mohou pomoci implementovat do výuky angličtiny i jazyk mateřský, v tomto případě češtinu. Součástí práce je i výzkum, který se soustředí na důvody použití češtiny v hodinách anglického jazyka; výzkum byl proveden na dvou školách a dva učitelé anglického jazyka jsou tedy předměty výzkumu. Praktická část práce obsahuje pozorování hodin, rozhovory s učiteli a výsledky výzkumu. Závěr z pozorování a rozhovorů byl napsán pro každého učitele zvlášť, v závěru došlo ke srovnání, kde bylo zjištěno, že hlavním důvodem užití češtiny u obou, je zadávání instrukcí. Český jazyk se také často používá jako podpora studentů při jejich práci. Dalším cílem této práce bylo zjistit, zda jazyková úroveň studentů ovlivňuje používání češtiny. Podle pozorovaných učitelů a hodin bylo zjištěno, že úroveň studentů nemá na používání češtiny vliv.